

Three Advent Recitals

on the Grand Organ

in

St. Paul's Church

Saturdays

From Four o'Clock till Five o'Clock

1957

DECEMBER 7th

CHARLES PEAKER with
MARIE PEAKER (pianist)

DECEMBER 14th

CHARLES PEAKER with the CHOIR
and SOLOISTS of the Church

DECEMBER 21st

DOUGLAS ELLIOTT with
ELIZABETH ELLIOTT (soprano)

Rector: ARCHDEACON CECIL SWANSON, D.D.

We are much indebted to Dr. Robert Hunter, Mr. Lloyd Hinton, Dr. R. C. Berkinshaw, Mr. Charles Plummer, Mr. Harold Bennett, Mr. A. B. Jackson, Mr. J. C. Hodge, Mr. Campbell Parsons, Mr. R. Dennison, Mr. W. Prior and others who are kindly acting as ushers at these recitals.

DECEMBER 7th

Charles Peaker

Marie Peaker (pianist)

Prelude and Fugue on B A C H - - - - - Bach (1685-1750)

In the German alphabet the letters B A C H give us a musical theme on which many composers (notably Schumann, Liszt and Reger) have based compositions. Today's example, attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach, is more probably by almost any one among his sixty organ-playing relatives. We may infer from the prelude that the composer wore a wig; the fugue indicates high spirits and some sense of the dramatic.

Come Redeemer of our race - - - - - Bach (1685-1750)

Once He came in blessing

When Bach wished to leave the service of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar for that of Prince Leopold at Anhalt-Cöthen the Duke ignored his request. Bach demanded his release in a somewhat peremptory tone and the Duke placed him under arrest for a week or two. The composer then sat down and wrote the "Little Organ Book"—a series of preludes on chorales arranged according to the church year. These are the first two of the Advent series.

Concerto in A minor - - - - - Grieg (1843-1907)

Allegro moderato, Adagio, Allegro

In the works of Grieg, Hans Andersen, Ibsen, Sibelius and others we feel the magnetic power of the North. The Aurora Borealis, the mountains and the ice-cold fjords are there together with all the weird folk-lore of these lands of the midnight sun. This Concerto was written in 1868.

INTERMISSION

La Vallée du Béhorleguy, au matin - - - - - Bonnal (1880-)

The School of the little Fauns - - - - - Piérne (1863-1937)

The Bonnal piece with its bells and haunting flute-songs comes from the Basque country at the base of the Pyrenees. Piérne's little dance is clearly more concerned with Mount Olympus and the Pipes of Pan.

Morning Mood - - - - - Grieg (1843-1907)

"Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops."
Romeo and Juliet.

Cortege Academique - - - - - MacMillan (1893-)

This splendid march was written for the centenary of University College in 1953. There is pomp and ceremony here, and, in the second theme, a profound respect as we look back over the great history of the place.

"... for God loveth

DECEMBER 14th

The Choir and the Quartette

The Bells of St. Chad's - - - - - Heathcote Statham (1889-)

A bell figure appears in almost every bar of this gay piece. It was written by the organist of Norwich Cathedral, Dr. D. Heathcote Statham, and is inscribed to the recitalist.

Tocatta for Flutes - - - - - John Stanley (1713-1786)

At the age of eleven the blind organist John Stanley was organist of "All Hallows", Bread Street, in London. He wrote a cantata for the marriage of George the Third and Queen Charlotte; Gainsborough painted his portrait at that time.

Carol - - - - - - - - - Whitlock (1903-1946)

Fanfare

Delius is invoked in the Carol; indeed Whitlock has borrowed the cuckoo which was heard in Spring. The love of pageantry which England understands so well is evident in the second piece.

INTERMISSION

In dulci jubilo (The Choir)	-	-	-	-	-	Pearsall (1795-1856)
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Pearsall was an English lawyer, but, like Schumann he forsook that profession in favour of music. His part-songs, madrigals and motets illustrate alike his understanding of vocal style and his superb taste.

The Wilderness (Choir and Soloists) - - - - Wesley (1810-1876)

Samuel Sebastian Wesley wrote this masterpiece of English Cathedral music while organist of Hereford Cathedral. It is a verse anthem, in that passages for solo voices alternate with full choir. Surely the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah was never set more eloquently than this.

Choral Song and Fugue Wesley (1810-1876)

Wesley was the grand-son of the Rev. Charles Wesley. When it is known that Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, was nearly related to the founders of Methodism, and that the then Viceroy of India was another of the circle it will be seen that the eminence in Cathedral music of at least three Wesleys was only one facet of a general excellence. The family hailed from Ireland.

SOLOISTS

Frances Conacher, soprano

Robert Doane, tenor

Evaleen Dunlop, contralto

Harry Maude, bass

a cheerful giver” (Corinthians 9: verse 7)

Prog-1064

DECEMBER 21st

Douglas Elliott Elizabeth Elliott (soprano)

Chaconne in G minor - - - - - Couperin (1668-1733)

Francois Couperin was organist of "St. Gervais" in Paris for the last forty-eight years of his life. He was also "Organiste du Roi" and a clavecinist in the Royal Chapel. Louis the Fourteenth was his profound admirer.

Flute Tune - - - - - Arne (1710-1778)

Here is another who broke away from legal studies. Ostensibly concentrating on jurisprudence far into the night he was in reality practising the spinet with a cloth to mute the strings. His songs show his gift for melody and there is something peculiarly fresh and English about little pieces such as we now hear.

Adagio - - - - - Fiocco (1703-1741)

There is nothing to say about this beautiful melody. The Fioccos were a musical family who left Venice for Brussels in the eighteenth century.

Toccat in F - - - - - Bach (1685-1750)

Bach was about thirty-two years old when he wrote this work. He was organist to the Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Saxe Weimar and performed on a two manual organ which had ten stops on the Great, eight on the second keyboard and seven on the Pedal, including a thirty-two foot "Gross Untersatz". In the score some of the upward sequences suddenly drop an octave; this was because of the short manual compass of the little organ.

INTERMISSION

Exsultate, Jubilate - - - - - Mozart (1756-1791)

Exsultate, Jubilate was written at the age of seventeen when Mozart was staying in Italy. Owing to its length Mrs. Elliott is reluctantly omitting the first movement and singing for us the recitative "Fulget amica dies", the Aria "Tu virginum corona" and the brilliant "Alleluia".

Rhapsodie Gregorienne - - - - - Langlais (1904-)

Chant du Paix

Langlais, Messiaen, Alain, and others, are the twentieth century protagonists of that distinguished French school of organ music which had its inception with men like Lemmens, Guilmant and Boely. This is quite apart of course from the great classical composers like De Grigny, the Couperin family, Titelouze and Clerambault who would doubtless find the music we hear today completely mystifying in its complexity.

Variations on a Noel - - - - - Dupre (1886-)

Ten Variations and a stunning finale comprise this exciting work which was published in 1923. The innocent old tune is given out first and then attired in a bewildering variety of gorgeous costumes, all of them unmistakably French. Incidentally, those who have never heard the eminent virtuoso himself may form some opinion of his immense technique from this and other of his works.